Team Teach Policy

Version:	1
Authorised by:	**S. Morrison CEO (Chief Executive Officer)**
For use in:	All Elmtree Learning Partnership sites
Date:	September 2025
Date of next Review:	September 2026

Elmtree Learning Partnership fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection.

Policy agreed (date)	September 2022
Policy published (date	September 2022
Next review (date)	September 2026

Key Safeguarding Personnel			
Role	Name	Telephone	Email
The key safeguarding responsibilities within each of the roles above are set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)			

Early Help - single point of entry: Children's Social Care referrals: Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): Out of hours:	0300 456 0108

The Legal Framework

Team Teach strategies should be limited to emergency situations and used only as a last resort. Under the Children Order 1995, it is only permissible as described under the heading "Physical Control". Article 4 of the Education Order 1998 clarifies powers that already exist in common law. It enables teachers and other members of staff in the centre, authorised by the principal, to use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances, to prevent a pupil from:

- Committing an offence
- Causing personal injury to a person or damage to the property of any person.
- Engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline at the centre or among its pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.

(Examples of possible situations are given in Appendix 1)

Definition of Team Teach at Elmtree Learning Partnership

Team Teach is the positive application of force with the intention of protecting the child from harming himself or others or seriously damaging property.

General policy aims

The Elmtree Learning Partnership staffing team recognise that the use of reasonable force is only one of the last in a range of strategies available to secure pupil safety and well-being and also to maintain good order and discipline. Our policy on personal handling should therefore be read in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy and Child Protection policies.

Specific aims of the Team Teach policy

- To protect every person in the centre community from harm
- To protect all pupils against any form of physical intervention that is unnecessary, inappropriate, excessive, or harmful
- To provide adequate information and training for staff so that they are clear as to what constitutes appropriate behaviour and to deal effectively with violent or potentially violent situations

Why use Team Teach?

Team Teach strategies should avert danger by preventing or deflecting a child's action or perhaps by removing a physical object, which could be used to harm him / herself or others. It is only likely to be needed if a child appears to be unable to exercise self-control of emotions and behaviour.

It is not possible to define every circumstance in which physical restraint would be necessary or appropriate and staff will have to exercise their own judgement in situations, which arise within the above categories. Staff should always act within the Centre's policy on behaviour and discipline, particularly in dealing with disruptive behaviour.

Staff should be aware that when they are in charge of children during the centre day, or during other supervised activities, they are acting in loco parentis and should, therefore, take reasonable action to ensure pupils' safety and well-being

Failure to physically intervene with a pupil who is subsequently injured or injures another, could, in certain circumstances, lead to an accusation of negligence. At the same time, staff are not expected to place themselves in situations where they are likely to suffer injury because of their intervention.

Alternative strategies

There are some situations in which the need for physical intervention is immediate and where there are no equally effective alternatives (e.g., When a pupil is about to run across a road). However, in many circumstances there are alternatives e.g., the use of skills such as:

- the broken record in which an instruction is repeated until the pupil complies
- use of a distracter, such as a loud whistle, to interrupt the behaviour (such as a fight) long enough for other methods of verbal control to be effective
- withdrawal of attention (audience) e.g., if an action such as damage to property is threatened
- other techniques designed to defuse the situation, such as the avoidance of confrontation, or use of humour (in these cases the incident can be dealt with later when emotions are no longer running high)
- the employment of other sanctions consistent with the centre's policy on behaviour.

Use of Physical Intervention

Physical intervention should be applied as an act of care and control with the intention of re- establishing verbal control as soon as possible and, at the same time, allowing the pupil to regain self-control. It should never take a form that could be seen as a punishment.

Staff are only authorised to use reasonable force in applying physical intervention, although there is no absolute definition of this, as what constitutes reasonable force depends upon the particular situation and the pupil to whom it is being applied. However, as a rule, only the force necessary to stop or prevent the behaviour should be used, in accordance with the guidelines below.

There are some forms of physical intervention, which may involve minimal physical contact, such as blocking a pupil's path or the staff member physically interposing him or herself between the pupil and another pupil or object. However, in some circumstances, direct physical contact may be necessary.

In all circumstances, other methods should be used if appropriate and effective physical intervention should be a last resort.

When physical intervention becomes necessary:

DO

- Tell the pupil what you are doing and why

- Use the minimum force necessary
- Involve another member of staff if possible
- Tell the pupil what s/he must do for you to remove the restraint (this may need frequent repetition)
- Use simple and plain language
- Hold limbs above a major joint, if possible, e.g., above the elbow
- Relax your hold in response to the pupil's compliance

DON'T

- Involve yourself in a prolonged verbal exchange with the pupil Attempt to reason with the pupil
- Involve other pupils in the intervention
- Touch or hold the pupil in sexual areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend finger or pull hair
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g., around the neck Slap, punch, kick, or trip up the pupil
- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)
- Act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control

Actions after an incident

Physical intervention often occurs in response to highly charged emotional situations and there is a clear need for debriefing after the incident, both for the staff involved and the pupil. A member of the leadership team should be informed verbally of any incident as soon as possible and all interventions should be recorded on the centre CPOMS system. (Child Protection Online Monitoring System)

The senior leadership team will take responsibility for arranging for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. An appropriate member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support, and their parents informed.

If the behaviour is part of an ongoing pattern, it may be necessary to address the situation through the development of a behaviour plan, which may include an anger management programme, or other strategies agreed by the principal. Any behaviour plan should always be discussed and agreed with the parent.

It is also helpful to consider the circumstances precipitating the incident to explore ways in which future incidents can be avoided.

All incidents should be recorded immediately. All sections of a report should be completed so that in the event of any future complaint a full record is available. A member of the leadership team will contact parents as soon as possible after an incident, normally on the same day, to inform them of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

4. Risk Assessments

If we become aware that a pupil is likely to behave in a disruptive way that may require the use of reasonable force, we will plan how to respond if the situation arises. Such planning will address:

- Management of the pupil (e.g., reactive strategies to de-escalate a conflict)
- Involvement of parents to ensure that they are clear about the specific action the centre might need to take
- Briefing of staff to ensure they know exactly what action they should be taking (this may identify a need for training or guidance)
- Identification of additional support that can be summoned if appropriate

Complaints

A clear physical intervention policy, adhered to by all staff and shared with parents, should help to avoid complaints from parents. It is unlikely to prevent all complaints, however, and a dispute about the use of force by a member of staff might lead to an investigation, either under disciplinary procedures or by the Police and social services department under child protection procedures.
It is our intention to inform all staff, pupils and parents about these procedures and the context in which they apply.

Appendix 1

When might it be appropriate to use reasonable force?

Examples of situations that may require physical intervention are when:

- a pupil attacks a member of staff, or another pupil
- pupils fighting
- a pupil is causing, or at risk of causing, injury, or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials, substances, or objects
- a pupil is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a way in which he/she might have or cause an accident likely to injure her/himself or others
- a pupil absconding from a class or trying to leave the centre (NB this will only apply if a pupil could be at risk if not kept in the centre)
- a pupil persistently refuses to obey an order to leave an area
- a pupil behaves in such a way that seriously disrupts a session.